EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES NEWSLETTER

CALWORKSnews

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Inside

- Career Fairs - Useful hints for attending them.
- A former welfare recipient recalls her many years on welfare.
- Calworks-How it works to benefit you.

Back on Track— My Success Story

by Stephanie Davis-Crosby

I needed a change in my life when I came to San Francisco in January of 1993. Being a single parent, I needed to find a job with good pay and benefits I wanted to return to school to further my education and learn new skills, so I could move into a healthy and safe environment for my child. I wanted to be the perfect role model.

While living in Texas I learned lots of different skills, but only had food industry experience. Later on, I attended business school and studied data entry. I still didn't have any hands on experience in that field and I didn't want to go back to food service because wages were not enough to make a living. My self esteem was low and I lacked confidence in myself to look for a clerical or secretarial job since I didn't think I'd meet up to the employer's expectations.

I finally applied for some financial help-I never said welfare because I was ashamed of being on it and I didn't want my family to think I was going to rely on public assistance and become lazy.

Soon after, I joined the GAIN program where I was able to build up my self esteem and restore confidence in myself. I really benefitted from the program. I started working at Arriba Juntos as an office clerk but had to stop working for a while because I was pregnant. After my daughter arrived and once I felt comfortable putting her in child care, I rejoined GAIN and entered the Express to Success Center where I restored my strengths and got back to work.

'Thanks to the support of ETSC and my own achievements, I can proudly say I have a lot to offer an employer"

Checking daily with the success center really paid off. That's how I got my job at Department Human Services as a Public Service aide, says Stephanie Davis-Crosby. (pictured above)

My life was back on the ball! As soon as I joined the ETSC I got a job in retail. With welfare reform on the horizon and the pressure to find employment fast, I took a job in retail. It wasn't very challenging but I was able to gain new experiences. Still, I knew there was something more for me so I kept checking with ETSC on upcoming jobs. It really paid off! I now work for the Department of Human Services as a Public Service Aide for the Shelter Plus Care Program Thanks to the support of ETSC and my own achievements I can proudly say I have a lot to offer an employer.

I also want to share that I enjoy making a safe and nurturing home for my 8 year old son and 2 year old daughter. I've managed to get off of welfare and every day I'm one step closer to being that perfect role model for the people I love most

Job Developer, John Bailey is shown discussing job leod developments with a support group porticipont.

A Jump Start for Job Seekers

by John Bailey, ETS Job Developer

Do you want to share the problems, fears and barriers you experience in your search for employment? If the answer is yes to those questions, then come join the Gates Support Group–a once a week open forum meeting. Facilitators John Bailey and David Lein use a strength perspective focus that is encouraging and supportive for participants.

Quest speakers, former Gates participants now employed, tell of their successes on the job and how to work towards job stability. Information about Gates services and the latest job referrals are shared at the end of the meetings.

Noah's New York Bagels and Smart and Final have taken an interest in what we do and have generously donated food to group meetings.

With good vibes from participants and ongoing support from outside agencies the Gates Support Groups have really taken off. From members input we know that the sessions are helpful and inspiring. Positive and motivating energies flow constantly–the exact ingredients needed to help land that job!

Call David Lein at 415.558.4762 for more information regarding future meetings.

the Career Ladder Laterally

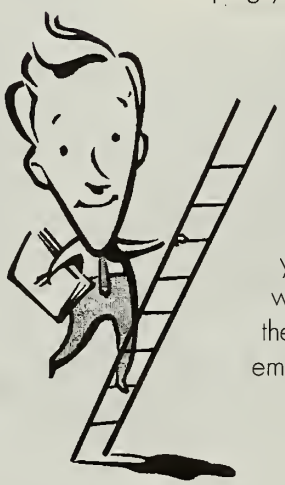
Moving up in your organization may not necessarily mean logical, vertical growth. It often is possible to grow your career sideways. This is especially important in an era when whole layers of upper management are being trimmed and it becomes essential to look in new directions for opportunities. Try these strategies that can make you a more qualified candidate for promotion:

Avoid the "specialist" label.
Concentrate on developing and demonstrating diverse talents that not only help you excel in your current job, but which also are portable.

Develop wide-ranging contacts.
Broaden your horizons and circle of aquaintances within your company. Don't be reluctant to discuss with your boss your plans for career development. Often, a supportive boss is able to use his or her contacts to land new assignments for a valued staffer.

Train a successor.
Management will be more receptive to your moving on if your job is covered. Focus on helping train someone to the level of competence and confidence required to step into your shoes.

Match your growth to the company's
Discuss with your boss where the company is headed and what skills you should develop to play a key role in its future. Keep informed through professional organizations and publications about trends shaping your field.



Don't cling to the old ways.
Tackle a new position with an open mind and a willingness to learn and adapt. Be prepared to learn from mistakes as you grow and gain new skills that will make you more valuable to the organization and more widely employable.

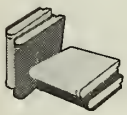
— Career Source 1998

How to Make a Career Fair Work for You

Career Fairs are an ideal place to look for a job or to consider changing career paths. It's also a time saving device to explore the benefits and opportunities of various employers in the marketplace and compare them to your present employer. Companies are looking to fill a wide range of positions—accounting, administrative, sales, management, manufacturing, and much more. There are definitely ways to go about making a career fair work best for you, and make it a rewarding experience.

WORLD WIDE WEB

Before you attend a career fair, find out who will be participating, and do a bit of research into the companies you are interested in approaching. Most career fair companies will list companies participating in the Sunday classifieds before the event in the local newspaper. You can also find out earlier who will be participating by calling the job fair company or by looking at their website.



One of the best resources for researching companies is your public library. Also, many companies have websites that you can explore to find out more about what they do and about their corporate culture. Most search engines can help you find their internet addresses.

Plan to spend some time doing research. It will be worth the effort if it gets you the job you are looking for!

As for attending the coreer fair, remember that this is a first impression/first interview situation! Dress professionally and bring copies of your up-to-date resume. Try to leave the kids with a bobysitter. You will want to be able to conentrate on your conversations with employers. Spend os much time as you need at the event to talk to the employers and take advantage of career building seminors that may be going on throughout the day.

Some employers will be hiring right there at the event. Others will be taking resumes, talking briefly with candidates and will schedule interviews later with qualified candidates. Different companies have different procedures, so be flexible.

After the career fair, be sure to follow up with a thank you note to any companies you were particulorly interested in. It is not only good etiquette, but it also can be used to clarify any information or restate your strong points. It will set you apart from the crowd and may get you the job sooner rather thon loter.

The more attention you put into being prepared for a career fair, the better you look and the more productive the event can be for you in helping you find the perfect job.

— Coreer Source 1997

My Life on Welfare

by Ester L. Fitting, Calworks Employment Training Specialist

What do you do when all the stability you have known for over fifteen years is a check on the first and the fifteenth of the month and food stamps once a month and you want out but don't know how to get out? For me it was the California Employment and Training Act (C.E.T.A) and for the participants that I work with I hope it will be CalWorks.

Employment Training Specialist, Ester Fitting, right, looks forward to motivating clients from welfare to work.

Where did it start for me, how does dependency begin? Here is my story.

In 1964 I was 17 years old, a high school drop out with a ten month old baby boy and expecting another baby in two months. My husband left me. What was I to do, where was I to go?

I came from a middle class working family, the oldest of seven children. My parents could not support me and my children. But, I did move back home, waited until the baby was born and discovered the welfare department. Eventually I moved into my own apartment with my two babies and began my long 21 year dependency on the welfare system. I started by applying for Aid to Needy Children program which eventually was replaced by AFDC - Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

After having divorced my first husband in 1970, I married my second husband who had been living with me. The welfare regulations changed temporarily and I was given the option of kicking him out or getting married so we got married (big mistake). My new husband was unemployed so we still received AFDC and I found myself caught in a situation with an abusive spouse. In those days I felt I had no one to turn to so I suffered in silence. Also in 1970 the family moved to Siskiyou County in Northern California.

Different training programs came and went. I tried one, the Work Incentive (WIN) program, but there were no supports built in for help when things started falling apart (unreliable childcare, no support from spouse etc...) so I dropped out.

In 1974, there was another baby in the household and suddenly I was looking at another 18 years in a bad relationship because I was bound and determined never to be a single mother again. Then one day in the spring of 1979, I woke up and decided that I'd had enough of never having enough money and having to report to someone every month. I was going to find a way to be independent and get out of this life long rut. I read a flyer about the C.E.T.A. program and a workshop they were giving. Attending the C.E.T.A. workshop was the beginning of my independence from welfare.

It didn't happen over night; there were many hurdles to overcome - High School Proficiency Exam, Community College Classes and many temporary jobs with the county government which eventually led to a permanent position with the Siskiyou County Planning Department and eventually to an Eligibility Worker position with that county.

In 1992, after my husband died, I became reacquainted with an old friend, moved to the San Francisco Bay Area, and we married later. I took the test for eligibility worker with the San Francisco county Dept. of Social Services and became a Food Stamp Eligibility Worker. Last year I took the test for Employment Training Specialist and here I am currently working in CalWorks.

If there is any way my experiences can help to motivate CalWorks participants in the partnership that we are about to embark on, then I'll be happy to share with them. I'll also try to be there for them even if all they need is a pat on the back for a job well done, a word of encouragement or a shoulder to cry on.

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ALERT! ALERT! Be Aware of the Seven Ways to Lose a Job

What qualities in employees irritate bosses the most? Burke Marketing Research asked executives in 100 of the nation's 1,000 largest companies.

At the top of the list was dishonesty. Marc Silbert, whose temporary-employee firm commissioned the study, says, "If a company believes that an employee lacks integrity, all positive qualities — ranging from skill and experience to productivity and intelligence — become meaningless."

Six other factors were discovered, making a total of "seven deadly sins" that can cause you to lose your job. They are listed below in decreasing order of irritation value.

- Irresponsibility, goofing off, and doing personal business on company time. Silbert says this is not just a guy getting a phone call from his wife to pick up eggs on the way home. This is someone running a T-shirt business out of the office.
- Arrogance, ego problems, and excessive aggressiveness. Bosses dislike those who spend more time talking about their achievements than in getting the job done.
- Absenteeism and lateness.
- Not following instructions or ignoring company policy. This could include disobeying dress codes, policies about getting approval for activities, or other regulations. Failure to follow the rules makes management feel an employee can't be trusted.
- Whining and complaining. People who find it's never the right time or project for them may find themselves looking for a project somewhere else.
- Laziness or lack of commitment and dedication. If you don't care about the firm, they won't care about you.

Suggestion: if you want to keep your job, remember that technical competence is not enough. Work to avoid the seven deadly sins that will hold you back from advancement, or may even get you fired.

— Career Source 1997

Forging a Future for Myself

by Danna Callaway,
Gates Employment Training Specialist

When my first job ended in 1973, (I had problems with my employer) — I filed for AFDC and began a 12 year history of going nowhere. I was discouraged by everything around me until a friend gave me an application for an eligibility position at the welfare office. After completing the form, I told my eligibility worker, Victor Perez, of my plans to take the test. He made me feel that I could accomplish anything if I put my mind to it. He called me after I took the test – before I even knew my score – to inform me that I was number 83 out of 500 people. Soon after I was hired and a few years later I got a promotion to work as an Employment Training Specialist in the Gates Program. The encouragement that I received from Mr. Perez motivated me to get out of my comfort zone so I could have a better life for my family. I thank him from the bottom of my heart.

Donna Calloway left, Employment Training Specialist in Gates said that her eligibility worker's faith in her helped her move forward in her life.

What's Up With "CalWORKs"?

by Amanda Feinstein, Speciol Assistant for Workforce Development

The buzz of "Welfare Reform" is in the air, and has been for awhile. There is talk about the new "CalWORKs" program and rumors of change at the Department of Human Services. But what does it really mean for families receiving TANF/AFDC?

The most dramatic change of welfare reform is that a family cannot count on receiving TANF for an unlimited period of time. The new program adopted by the state last year - CalWORKs - limits to two years the amount of time most parents can receive aid (kids can stay on aid until they are 18). It also requires parents to be involved in a variety of activities, such as job training, internships, and employment, for a minimum of 26 hours a week.

"Many large and small employers are reaching out to specifically recruit and hire recipients of public assistance,"says Amanda Feinstein, (pictured above) Special Assistant For Workforce Development.

Fortunately, with all of these new requirements there are also new resources for CalWORKs participants. We are increasing critical services such as childcare, training programs, job placement and other support services.

There are more jobs in the Bay Area now, than in many years past. In San Francisco, unemployment is down and job growth is up. For DHS, the challenge is to make sure that this good news becomes real jobs for CalWORKs participants.

DHS is pursuing this goal in a number of ways. We are:

- Changing the job of eligibility workers to "Employment Specialists" who are trained to help CalWORKs particpants secure training, jobs and childcare, as well as cash benefits.

- Opening Career Centers in three neighbor hoods (Bayview, Mission, and Chinatown/Tenderloin) so our Employment Specialists, Job D e velopers and Assessors can serve particpants closer to where they live.

- Building partnerships with businesses and labor unions to help them recruit and train CalWORKs particpants as new employees.

- Working closely with other public and community based agencies to increase the childcare, training, job search, and other support services, and resources available.

The CalWORKs program does place some new obligations on families receiving TANF/AFDC. But it also offers many more resources than were available in the past. These resources and a strong economy create new opportunities for people who are unemployed to enter the job market.

The satisfaction, security and pride of earning a paycheck are great things to have. And DHS is committed to helping you get there!

"TEAMWORK
It takes two wings for a bird to fly."

Jesse Jackson

Really Hertz!

by Ed Lew, ETS CalWorks Trainer

Cheong Wong was a recent graduate of the Gateway Workshop. He spoke English, but he didn't want to use it because her was shy. While he was in the workshop, it became obvious to him that he still needed to improve and use his English to find employment.

"Working for Hertz is great" - says Cheong Wong, recently promoted to a full-time unionized

"I came into the workshop with no expectations. I had no idea what will happen. The class was just beginning and everyone looked up at me. The trainer spoke in simple sentences. What can he teach me that I don't already know? He pointed out that knowledge of English would improve your chances of finding a job outside of the Chinese community. He was right. Each day I came to the class to learn English. Each day he taught us how to open and close an interview, how to answer tough questions, how to utilize the telephone to find a job, and to dress for success. He referred me to the Hertz Corporation and I did everything that he taught me, from answering the tough questions to dressing up for the interview. The manager was impressed with me and gave me a part time job working as a hiker for 32 hours per week. I worked hard and was on time everyday. After the first month, I was promoted to team leader on the weekends. I worked even harder and worked overtime as required. Toward the end of the second month, the manager offered me a full time unionized position working in the garage. I couldn't believe it ! Hard work and being punctual does pay off. I was really lucky to have been invited to the Gateway Workshop. It really opened the doors for me. I want to take this opportunity to thank my trainer, Ed Lew. He was there every time I needed him. The workshop was held when most of the workers were in training for the CalWorks Program. With the assistance of clerk, Dolores Fields and Khoa Luong from EDD, Ed was able to initially place all seven of the graduates. I want to give special thanks to Leonard Gee, Supervisor, and trainers; Elise Leung, Tien Pham and Elba Navarro, and incoming job developer; Steve Lloyd for their continued support. I really appreciate it!"

THE RIGHT STUFF

Descriptive Words for More Effective Resumes

use adjectives such as:

- active
- assertive
- ambitious
- conscientious
- dependable
- efficient
- energetic
- self-reliant
- self-starting
- systematic

use verbs such as:

- conceived
- designed
- developed
- demonstrated
- established
- expedited
- increased
- improved
- implemented
- maintained
- planned
- reduced
- revised
- reorganized
- solved
- structured

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CALWORKs and Gates

CalWORKS and GATES are programs of the San Francisco Department of Human Services (DHS) responsible for administering employment and training services to eligible recipients of Public Assistance.

Employment programs administered by ETS include: CalWORKS, CAL-LEARN, GATES, and the Wage Subsidy Program.

CalWORKS and GATES provide employers with pre-screened, job-ready applicants at no cost. If you are an employer and want to hire ETS job ready participants, call the Employment Development Department (EDD) at (415) 749-7500, *please specify: Public Assistance Participant.*

For others who wish additional information regarding CalWORKS, call

CALWORKs 1.800.305.8906. ✆

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